

NEW ZEALAND'S DEDICATED VIDEO GAME MONTHLY

ISSUE FOURTY FOUR

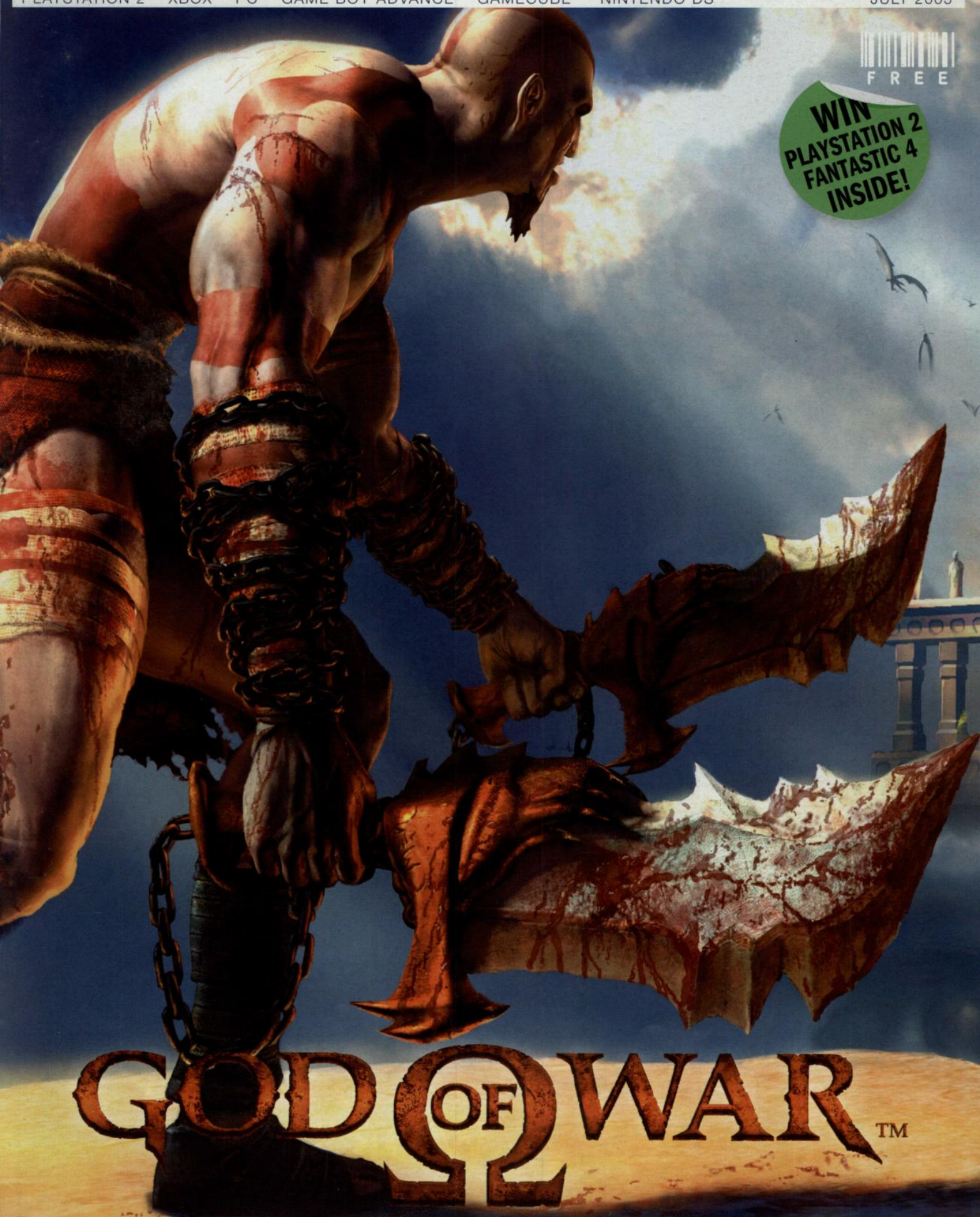
Gamefreaks

PLAYSTATION 2 XBOX PC GAME BOY ADVANCE GAMECUBE NINTENDO DS

JULY 2005



WIN
PLAYSTATION 2
FANTASTIC 4
INSIDE!

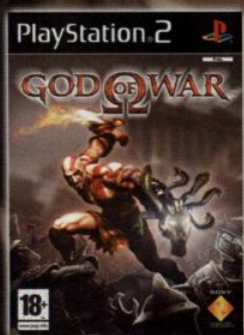


GOD OF WAR™

18+

www.pegi.info

God of War is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. © 2005 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Published by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe.



TAKE ON
MYTHOLOGY'S
WORST



fun
anyone?
PlayStation 2



www.eaplay.com



EA SPORTS™ **CRICKET** 2005



OUT NOW

www.eaplay.com



PlayStation.2



©2005 Electronic Arts Inc. All rights reserved. Electronic Arts, EA, EA Sports and the EA Sports logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Electronic Arts Inc. in the U.S. and/or other countries. All rights reserved. The New Zealand Cricket logo on this product is a trademark of, and used under license from, the owner New Zealand Cricket by whom all copyright and other rights of reproduction are reserved. All rights reserved. Copyright and trademarks licensed by the ECB. Player names, likenesses and other image rights are used under license from the Professional Cricketers Association and Team England player partnership. All other sponsored products, company names, brand names, trademarks and logos are the property of their respective owners. All rights reserved. EA SPORTS™ is an Electronic Arts™ brand. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logos are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox Live, the Live logo and the Xbox logos are registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.

Gamefreaks

PO Box 68-211
Newton
Auckland

Phone: +64 (0) 9 815 1565
Fax: +64 (0) 9 376 0696
Email: jon@tenthplanet.co.nz

staff

Publisher/Editor
Jon Minifie
jon@tenthplanet.co.nz

Sub Editor
Craig Scott

Design
Scott Judson

Words
Lee Marrett/Nigel Clark
Adrian Hatwell/Gerard Campbell

Advertising
Jon Minifie
jon@tenthplanet.co.nz
(09) 815 1565

Printed by
Vision Through Communication Ltd

Recommended Local Websites

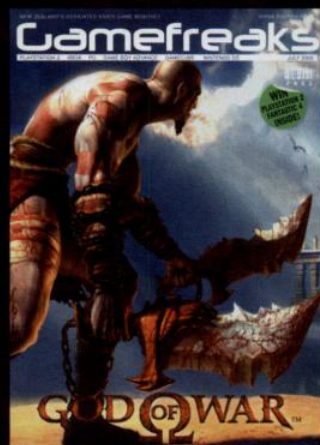
www.ea.co.nz www.nintendo.co.nz
www.xbox.co.nz www.nzgamer.com
www.playstation.co.nz www.nzbf2.com
www.gamers.co.nz www.binary-star.com

thank you

Adrian, Aiden, Amy, Andy, Anne, BNE, Ben, Bonnie, Bob, Bruce, Chris, Clare, Craig, Danny, Dave, Dean, Ed, Emma, Ewan, Gary, Gina, Heath, Izzy, Jenny, Jemma, Ken, Kenny, Lawrence, Leroy, Liv, Luc, Louise, Macka, Maria, Mark, Matthew, Mike, Nathan, Neal, Ngaire, Nic, Paul, Pip, Raja, Ross, Rowen, Sacha, Scott, Shelley, Simon, Steve, Teresa, Tess, Tom, Wilf.

issue

44



on the cover

You'd need a tractor to wade your way through the hype surrounding Sony's God of War, but we're happy to report that in this particular case, the hype is well justified – we think it's one of the best PS2 exclusives to date; check out the review on page 12 and then go to the back to win yourself a copy.



Noel Leeming

BOND BOND

Harvey Norman
COMPUTERS & COMMUNICATIONS

UNITED
VIDEO

VIDEO
EZY

NEW ZEALAND GRABS NINTH AT E-SPORTS CUP

Nicholas McCabe and Stuart Cannan shine as kiwis excel at recently held E-Sports World Cup

New Zealand placed 9th at the inaugural Gran Turismo competition of the Electronic Sports World Cup held in Paris from 6-10 July. The event saw 24 virtual drivers amongst a total of over 800 players, with New Zealand represented by Australasian champion Stuart Cannan (Joe Racer) in GT4 and Unreal Tournament player Nicholas McCabe (Evenflow).

McCabe, who won bronze at the 2002 World Cyber Games in Korea, had been out of practice after putting his June exams ahead of the chase for US\$12000 in prizemoney. Bootcamping in Lisbon prior to the Paris finals, commentators declared his performance showed new maturity, but it was not enough to make it out of the pool rounds. Evenflow placed third in his group as the top two progressed to the knockout stages.

New Zealand tournament organisers have nevertheless been encouraged. "We now have proven, world class players in both GT and UT," says ESWC and WCG organiser Martin Caie. "We look forward to seeing the Unreal Tournament franchise return to the World Cyber Games when UT2k7 is released, and lending our strength to that competition as well."

New Zealand's top Counter-Strike team, Parallax, was also invited to attend the World Cup but with the competition using an old version of the game, the team declined in order to continue training with the latest version for the World Cyber Games grand final in Singapore this November.



New Zealand placed 9th at the inaugural Gran Turismo competition of the Electronic Sports World Cup held in Paris from 6-10 July

SIDHE ENTERING THE HOME STRAIGHT

Wellington based developers Sidhe Interactive are working on a new racing title with a twist

Home Entertainment Suppliers Pty Ltd (HES) and Player One Limited today announced the development of a new horse racing videogame, Frankie Dettori Racing for PS2, Xbox and PC.

"Frankie Dettori is the worlds most popular and successful Jockey", said Sebastian Giompaolo, Managing Director for HES. "We are proud to have the 'Frankie Factor' in our videogame and look forward to a long and successful partnership with both Frankie and Player One, the interactive rights holders of Frankie Dettori and other global sports licenses."

"Our studio is delighted to be working on another strong sports franchise with HES" said Mario Wynands, Managing Director of Sidhe Interactive, the development studio behind the title. "Frankie Dettori Racing is an opportunity for us to raise the bar in the horse racing gaming genre by providing ease of accessibility and superior graphical realism".

Frankie Dettori Racing is expected for release on PS2, Xbox and PC in Europe in November 2005 under Tru Blu Games, the publishing division of HES. The title will also be released in Australasia under the name "Melbourne Cup Challenge".



FANTASTIC PLAYSTATION 2 GIVEAWAY

Win a PlayStation 2 and a copy of Fantastic 4 with Sony and Activision

Sony and Activision have joined forces this month to come up with a magnificent Fantastic 4 prize pack.

Some lucky reader is going to win a brand new PlayStation 2, kindly donated by Sony Computer Entertainment NZ, along with a brand new copy of Activision's latest superhero title that lets you play as The Fantastic Four, utilising all the powers of Marvel's most unique family of Super Heroes, in the only team-based action-adventure game based on the upcoming feature film from Twentieth Century Fox. You can read our review for this title on page 18 and go to the back for more competition details.



NEWS IN BRIEF

>> If the site Hollywood Reporter is to be believed then 20th Century Fox and Universal Pictures have joined forces to create the movie adaptation of Halo. Negotiations are still underway, but the script is being taken care of by Alex Garland (28 Days Later).

>> Building upon the success of last year's title, which shipped more than two million units worldwide, WWE Smackdown! Vs. RAW 2006 adds all new features, while refining what made the original a hit with both wrestling fans and casual gamers alike.

The newly created "Momentum System" will recreate the real life emotional peaks and valleys of an actual wrestling match, while the addition of a "Stamina System" will force players to play more strategically.

>> Microsoft Game Studios announced that Fable: The Lost Chapters, currently in development for Windows and slated to release later this year for the PC, will also be available for Xbox. Fable: The Lost Chapters builds upon the original with loads of new content including new regions, quests and enhanced story elements that further enhance the mystical world of Albion.

HARNESS THE POWER OF FOUR
06.28.05



FANTASTIC



Play as each member of the Fantastic Four in
the ultimate team-based action-adventure game!

WWW.F4THEGAME.COM



GAME BOY ADVANCE

PlayStation 2



ACTIVISION



Marvel, The Fantastic Four, and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of Marvel Characters, Inc., and are used with permission. Copyright © 2005 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. www.marvel.com. The Fantastic Four Motion Picture and Images from the Motion Picture: TM & © 2005 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation FANTASTIC FOUR Character Likenesses TM & © 2005 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. Published by Activision Publishing, Inc. Game © 2005 Activision Publishing, Inc. Activision is a registered trademark of Activision Publishing, Inc. Licensed for play on the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment systems with the NTSC U/C designation only. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. TM & © 2005 IEMA. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.

activision.com

HALO 2 MULTIPLAYER MAP PACK

XBOX / MICROSOFT

Consider yourself a Halo 2 fan? Then you'll be pleased to know that the folks at Bungie have at long last completed their expansion pack the Halo 2 Multiplayer Map Pack. Let the fragging begin!

However something has to be taken into account first. If you're looking for more single player goodness, or some sort of resolution to the campaign then you're going to come away disappointed cause there's nothing there. The maps contained will also become free downloads over Xbox Live in the coming months so the question is, how bad do ya want it?

Well if you're the type to play on Xbox Live or drag your Xbox to a friends house for a LAN session then the answer will be 'very much'! On offer are nine new maps, effectively doubling what Halo 2 has to offer so if you're getting a touch sick of playing on Zanzibar then relief is here at last. The maps have had thousands of hours of test time gone into their creation and it shows because they are extremely well balanced, varied and a whole lot of fun to play on. Fans of the original Halo will also recognize a few old faces, Warlock is a remake of the classic Wizard map. Backwash takes the Swamp level where Master Chief met 343 Guilty Spark and turns it into a close quarters battleground where vision is impeded by damp mists.



FORMULA ONE 05

PLAYSTATION 2 / SCEI

There is very little doubt that most purchasers of Formula One 05 will be F1 fans. The game faithfully recreates the sport with a raft of official sponsorship, drivers, cars and tracks.

There is an incredible amount of depth in Formula One 2005 with everything from driving aids to interactive pit stops available to the player. The additional features such as the unlockable items pad out the game are neat little touches. Calls to the pit crews are accomplished through the touch of a single button on the controller, and in some respects it's then that comparisons between the button heavy steering wheels in the actual cars and videogame controllers can be made, making the control systems very intuitive.

There are several viewpoints that players can take part in the race, although hardcore F1 fanatics will undoubtedly go for the cockpit view, making detailed knowledge of each track essential. Formula One 05 allows players to amend a whole raft of options from race length, damage, and sensitivity of the controls all of which increases the game's accessibility.



OUTLAW VOLLEYBALL REMIXED

PLAYSTATION 2 / TAKE 2 INTERACTIVE

Outlaw Volleyball provides fast, furious, and uncouth action online so anyone and everyone can experience the outrageous humour and fantastic gameplay. Scantily-clad babes and seriously twisted dudes bring their famous "Outlaw" vibe onto the court as they bump, set, spike, AND throw punches on their way to victory.



SERIOUS SAM 2

XBOX, PC / ACTIVISION

Serious Sam 2 picks up where Second Encounter left off. When we last saw Sam, he was headed for a final showdown with his nemesis Mental. This will, of course, involve violence.

There are more than forty stages, set in places like bizarrely futuristic alien cities, volcanoes, and jungles. One particularly memorable area takes place on a world of giants, where Sam – and many of Mental's imported minions – is less than a relative inch tall. Ever wanted to hunt giant ants with a rocket launcher?



187 RIDE OR DIE

PS2, XBOX, PC / UBISOFT

187 Ride or Die is an urban-themed combat racing game that plunges players into a brutal street-racing gang war, where victory depends on ruthless driving and deadly shooting skills.

Players will have to take out the opposition with numerous weapons, including an array of pistols, shotguns, and many more. There will be several different game modes including single player Death Race, Cop Chase and Assassination. Players will also be able to battle with their friends on Xbox Live.

THE HOG IS OUT!

All the games you want from just \$19.95 a month.

gamehog.co.nz®

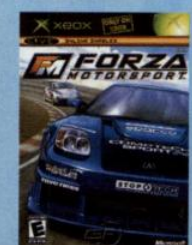
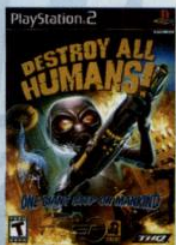
New Zealand's first **dedicated** online game rental site brings you unlimited gaming for a flat monthly fee! Choose from a **huge range** of **PS2 and XBox game titles** delivered direct to your door.

Sign up now for your FREE 2 week trial!



No due dates!
No late fees!
No shipping costs!
Cancel anytime!

Rent games online at www.gamehog.co.nz





ALTEC LANSING AHS-502i STEREO HEADPHONES

RECOMMENDED RETAIL: \$119.95

Any hardcore PC gamer understands that for the best in audio quality, a great set of headphones is the way to go. Altec Lansing has been in the business for a long time and has come to understand this and have unleashed the AHS-502i stereo headphones on the world.

Simple to use, the headset only needs to be plugged into the microphone and audio ports in your sound card and you're away. The black and silver coloration keeps the design simple, but in a stylish and non-trashy way that we appreciated. The headband and ear muffs are well padded and comfortable to wear and we were pleased to note that it could be adjusted to support head sizes of all kinds. The cord is longer than what we've come to expect from most headphones which is a definite plus to us. In easy reach is the inline control which also has a clip so you can attach it somewhere out of the way.

On the left earpiece is a microphone. This can be moved to a position that is comfortable to the wearer, or tucked straight up and out of the way. One of the features is noise dampening which means the persons that you are speaking to will hear you crystal clear; what they won't hear is your mother yelling at you to get off the computer from the other side of the room!

The sound quality of the Altec Lansing AHS-502i was exceptional. It features 40mm neodymium drivers which means it's more than capable of delivering on frequency response and booming bass. As well as for great gaming we felt that it provided exceptional quality and clarity for listening to music.

These headphones contain many features which would normally be expected from the extreme end of the cost spectrum. Surprisingly the 502 is very moderately priced, generally hanging around the bargain price of about \$50-\$60 in most stores. If you want to know more about these headphones visit www.alteclansing.com

NINTENDO DS

RECOMMENDED RETAIL: \$249.95

The Nintendo DS is no ordinary handheld console. The most obvious new feature is the two screens, the bottom of which is a touch screen.

The way this works in a game varies enormously, with first-person shooters that feel just as responsive as a PC keyboard and mouse and other games that use the touch screen and D-pad to create a control system that will have you actually drawing on the touch pad. Other games use the extra screen to display inventory or map info. The DS also has a built-in microphone and it can be connected wirelessly to sixteen or more other consoles. Not only that but some games and utilities even allow it to connect online via Wi-Fi.

The DS can display 3D graphics somewhere between a Nintendo 64 and the GameCube --it is still backwards compatible, so you can play all your old GBA games and with a battery life of around 10 hours the Nintendo DS gets pretty much everything right.



MADCATZ WIRELESS XBOX CONTROLLER

RECOMMENDED RETAIL: \$69.95

Mad Catz Interactive, the world's leading third party video game accessory manufacturer, announced the launch of wireless versions of its highly successful line of controllers for Xbox, PlayStation 2 and Gamecube. The controllers are available for an estimated retail price of \$69.95.

"Wireless controllers have been a high growth accessory category this holiday season," said Darren Richardson, President and CEO of Mad Catz. "The launch of the Microcon wireless line provides an additional opportunity to capitalize on that growth."

A natural extension of the range, the Mad Catz Wireless Controller sports all of the quality features game players have come to expect from the pint-sized controller, including the slim, ergonomic design, comfortable rubber grips, and high-quality analog buttons and joystick. With a 30 ft signal radius from controller to console, the Wireless Microcon is the ultimate tool for gamers ready to cut the cord.

MOMO RACING FORCE FEEDBACK WHEEL

RECOMMENDED RETAIL: \$249.95

Logitech's Momo Racing Wheel demands more space than a simple joystick or keyboard and mouse combo, but the benefits of using a steering wheel like this when playing racing games are well worth it; once it's clamped to your desk, the wheel doesn't take up as much desk real estate as you might initially imagine.

The foot pedals are well built, neither of them being too small or too large for our feet. We liked the feel of the steering wheel, which can rotate 240 degrees. In addition to providing you with a nice, sturdy grip when completing hairpin turns, the Momo features six programmable buttons, which should be more than enough for the average gamer.

The force feedback on the wheel is good and can be fully adjusted from none to 150 percent. Games like RallySport Challenge and Need for Speed played very well with the wheel--so well that after a few hours, we wondered how we ever played racing games without it.



©2005 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, the Microsoft Game Studios logo, Conker, Conker's Bad Fur Day, Rare, the Rare logo, Xbox, the Xbox logos, Xbox Live and the Xbox Live logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation or Rare Limited in the United States and/or other countries. Rare Limited is a subsidiary of Microsoft Corporation.

SUSPECT:
long furry tail.
Heavily armed.
Smells like a strip club.



MATURE 17+



Blood and Gore
Intense Violence
Mature Humor
Sexual Themes
Strong Language
Use of Drugs
Use of Alcohol

Back with a raging hangover, Conker is drinking, smoking, and chasing more hot, furry tail than ever. Well, when he's not blowing the stuffing out of Tediz. Take your deviant skills online to Xbox Live™, or you can always just play with yourself.



it's good to play together

XBOX LIVE

REPUBLIC★20419

Pending NZ Rating

GOD OF WAR

PLATFORM: PLAYSTATION 2
 GENRE: ACTION/ADVENTURE
 PUBLISHER: SCEI
 DEVELOPER: SCEI
 RATING: 15
 PLAYERS: 1 PLAYER
 WEBSITE: WWW.PLAYSTATION.CO.NZ
 RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE: \$119.95
 RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW



Of recent times, few PlayStation 2 games have attained as much deserved hype as Sony's mythic action adventure God of War. Never the type to shy away from the camera, Sony have been guaranteeing big things of their latest blockbuster, and it's a pleasant surprise to have a title that not only lives up to overblown promise but quite possibly exceeds it. There's a reason why there is as much buzz around God of War as there is; it's just plain good.

Set in the classical world of Greek mythology the game opens with a killer hook; our lead character, the hulking Spartan warrior Kratos, stands morosely atop the largest mountain in the land and hurls himself off towards certain death. Allegedly driven to madness by the divisive Gods, Kratos has chosen to end his mortal suffering and ease his tortured soul in death rather than be a plaything for the decadent immortals any longer. And so begins the unusually circular narrative of the game, leaving us little option than to flashback through the vicious Spartan's troubled past to discover exactly how he has been driven to such desperate measures.

When we first take control of Kratos he's still shrouded in mystery, without any further background we are immediately shoved into manic battle aboard a sinking ship under siege by the legendary Hydra creature. The action never slows down from there, but we are slowly drip fed information that helps to paint a picture of our battle ravaged Spartan; without giving away too



Say hello to Kratos. Savage, ruthless and tortured, Kratos served as a Spartan general before selling his soul to Ares for a life of power. He once lived to conquer, but now walks only to scour the land of war's opposition at his master's bidding



Superior graphics, sound, and story all make for a fantastic template upon which the actual game can be built

much of the relatively intriguing story it's enough to know that far from under his own volition Kratos is ultimately tasked with killing Ares, AKA the God of War, in order to save the great city of Athens.

Perhaps the most immediately striking feature of God of War is the scrupulous details that make up this incarnation of the ancient world of Greece. While a far cry from the traditional tone and purpose of classical storytelling, the game boasts a thoroughly impressive cast of titans, monsters, gods, and heroes that anyone with even a cursory knowledge of classical literature (or a few episodes of Xena under their belt) will instantly recognise. However there's a devilish playfulness at work in the game's design in that none of the familiar faces of the past are straight adaptation, God of War appropriates myth and twists the figures to its own light-hearted, ultra-violent, over-the-top ends.

In fact the tone of the game is, at times, quite difficult to peg down.

Sometimes Kratos appears to be a genuine tragic hero, a champion whose destiny is tainted by the machinations of the gods, yet he also seems to be a tongue-in-cheek parody of the generic videogame badass, with his hyper-

masculine physicality taken to comical extremes. It's a fine line to tread, but to the game's credit the story and action are engrossing enough for the often-problematic transitions from slapstick to macabre to be readily overlooked.

With its delightful mix of the myth, bloody action, nightmarish horror, and exaggerated toughness the game strikes a charming balance of sincerity and self-depreciation; this is a game fully aware of just how good it is without taking itself too seriously. It's a refreshing quality often lacking in many of the bloated chart toppers that currently crowd the shelves.

With a premise as original and well executed as this it is none too shocking that the other elements of the game don't quite live up to the same level of excellence, but its not for lack of trying. In particular the game's visuals exhibit both a technical competency and artistic flair very rarely seen on the PS2 hardware; although I'm sure with the next generation rapidly approaching the market will dictate otherwise, it would seem there is life in the old girl yet. Classical figures like the Cyclops and the Medusa are cleverly revised with fiendish new looks and smooth animations,



eclipsed only by the blood, sweat, and tears that have clearly gone into animating our boy Kratos.

The rugged warrior is possibly one of the best-implemented character models the PS2 has ever seen, from the menace of his pale, tattooed form to his intricate combo attacks that string together with striking fluidity and naturalism. Combined with some fantastic sound design, both in the wondrous and oft-haunting symphonic soundtrack, top-notch voice acting, and immensely satisfying battle effects, *God of War* is one of the most outright gorgeous games you're likely to see on the PlayStation 2, probably ever.

As has slowly, and fortunately, become



custom in modern action titles, game-play consists of a rather even measure of button mashing action and puzzle solving, with *God of War* privileging neither aspect over the other and creating a brilliant mesh usually reserved for pedigrees of the genre like *Zelda*. Welding a set of genuinely terrifying weapons known as the 'blades of chaos' (a pair of axe blades welded to lengths of chain fused to our hero's body), a great deal of Kratos' time is spent laying into hordes of goons in the most violently over-the-top manner. *God of War* is most definitely a 'mature' title in that it has gallons of blood, profanity, and a few sexual allusions that seem more than a little forced, although how these things came to constitute the term 'mature' I don't know.

Combat, consisting of a large range of all-too-easily executed combos supplemented with a few mini-game type finishers, is rather more generic and less exciting than the rest of the game would have us expect, baring some rather glaring similarities to the likes of *Prince of Persia* and *Legacy of Kane*. However, the action is saved time and again by two aspects; instances of astonishingly inventive choreography and a handful of the best boss fights your likely to come across this side of the 90's. With all that the game already has going for it, the occasionally dull hack-n-slash stint is easily forgiven.

The puzzle elements come dangerously close to the same problem, but they too are elevated above mediocrity, this time by insightful level designs. While most puzzles involve the stock-standard pulling of levels, unlocking doors, pushing statues, and all that jazz, they become far more interesting when put in as greater scope as they are here;



*Kratos can pull off some ridiculous combinations. It all works well because *God of War* is built upon one of the more responsive control configurations on the planet.*

puzzles will sometimes last a number of hours, with actions from the very beginning of a stage still having an effect by the end. Not only does this make for some truly interesting scenarios but also an element of difficulty that the rest of the game largely lacks.

God of War is, quite simply, one of the best games to come out on the PlayStation 2 in far too long; brilliantly conceived and admirably executed, a must for anyone who values original design, artistic panache, and substantial plotting in their videogames.

"AN EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIMENT IN

grand theft auto San Andreas

OUT NOW ON XBOX® AND PC

1 ENORMOUS STATE • HUNDREDS OF MILES OF HIGHWAY • 3 MAJOR CITIES: LOS SANTOS, SAN FIERRO, LAS VENTURAS
11 SMALL TOWNS • 34 WEAPONS • 12 CHAINS • 50 OYSTERS • 50 PHOTO OPS • 6 WANTED STARS • 8 GANGS
100 GRAFFITI TAGS • 7 AMMU-NATION STORES • 12 WATCHES • DOZENS OF RESTAURANTS • 11 RADIO STATIONS • 100 HORSESHOES
34 TATTOOS • 5X THE SIZE OF VICE CITY • 6 GIRLFRIENDS • 2 TRIATHLONS • 2500 FEET OF MOUNTAIN

WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/SANANDREAS

SOUNDTRACK AVAILABLE ON INTERSCOPE RECORDS



© 2005 Rockstar Games, Inc. Rockstar Games, Rockstar North, the R logo, Grand Theft Auto and the Grand Theft Auto logo are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. All other marks and trademarks are properties of their respective owners. All Rights Reserved. The content of this videogame is purely fictional, and is not intended to represent any actual person, business or organization. Any similarity between any character, dialogue, event or plot element of this game and any actual person, business or organization is purely coincidental. The makers and publishers of this videogame do not in any way endorse, condone or encourage this kind of behavior.

INTERACTIVE STORYTELLING.” – TIME MAGAZINE



5 GYMNASIUMS • 187 VEHICLES • 6 GAMES OF CHANCE • 33 HAIRCUTS • 7 BOUTIQUES • 10 DJs • 65 SHIRTS • ACRES OF COUNTRYSIDE
 44 PAIRS OF PANTS • DUAL WEAPONS • 37 SHOES • 70 UNIQUE STUNT JUMPS • 17 PAIRS OF SHADES
 56 HATS • 155 MUSIC TRACKS • OVER ONE MILLION CLOTHING COMBINATIONS • AND MUCH MUCH MORE...
 100% EPIC ACTION ADVENTURE. WELCOME TO SAN ANDREAS



CONKER: LIVE & RELOADED

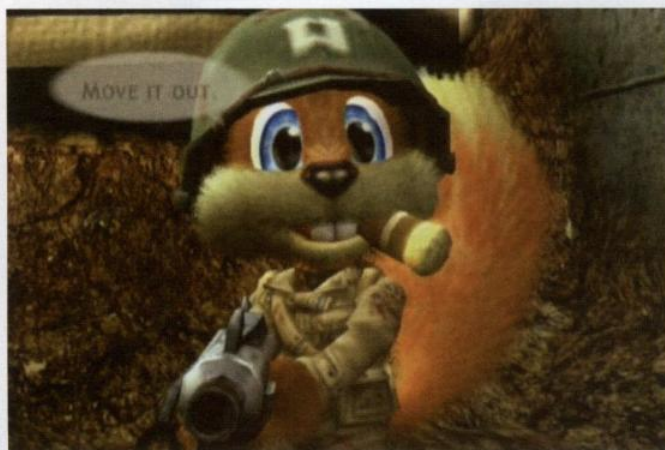
PLATFORM: XBOX
 GENRE: THIRD PERSON SHOOTER
 PUBLISHER: MICROSOFT
 DEVELOPER: RARE SOFTWARE
 RATING: 16
 PLAYERS: 1-2 PLAYERS/2-16 ONLINE
 WEBSITE: WWW.XBOX.CO.NZ
 RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE: \$99.95
 RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW



He's little, has a sunny smile, a smooth furry coat and big shiny round eyes. Conker the squirrel encapsulates all that is cute, the ideal character for any kid's platform game. However a kid's game this is not. Belying his outside appearance, Conker is a foul-mouthed, rude and completely self centered individual – and that's on his good days.

Conker Live & Reloaded is a complete remake of Rare's classic Nintendo 64 title Conker's Bad Fur Day. At it's heart the game follows the adventure of our distasteful rodent after he wakes up after a hard night of drinking, takes the wrong route home, discovers his bimbo girl-friend is kidnapped and somehow becomes the target of a Panther King who needs a squirrel to replace a broken table leg. Yup, the game has its weird parts.

A host of crazy characters and enemies populate the game, ranging from a drunken old scarecrow, bone wielding cavemen, smack talking piles of money and a giant poo that likes to



Conker's Bad Fur Day has been completely recreated for the Xbox with stunning graphics, new textures and unparalleled attitude

sing soprano...while throwing poo at you. By and large these crackpots will be introduced through the game's many cut-scenes which provide the bulk of the titles offbeat and rather foul British humor. As well as an unhealthy obsession with smelly bodily fluids and a great deal of gore, most of the conversations

are filled with swearing which is b**ped at the perfect moment so that you know exactly what was said and makes it all the more funny because of it. Who wouldn't crack up over a tiny rodent grim reaper who launches into b**ping abuse filled tirades against all forms of felines.

Most of the familiar platforming conventions are present in Conker Live & Uncut. Back in the N64 days the large areas to explore and fun mini-games really stood Conker out from the crowd. It's less so now perhaps when the PS2 has quality titles such as the Ratchet and Clank or Jaks franchises to offer; however we have to admit that it is a welcome addition to the Xbox library which even now continues to lack a decent repertoire of games in this particular genre.

On its own the single player game might not be worth much more than a good weekend rental. Fortunately Rare's been hard at work introducing an all new multiplayer mode which can

be played offline via split screen and system link or better yet on Xbox Live supporting up to 16 players. To sum up the idea behind all of this it's any of the Battlefield games meets cute little animals who want to blow each other into chunky gobbets of red flesh. The player joins either the forces of the Squirrels or their arch nemeses, the Tediz and plays one of a number of team based missions. Probably the most outstanding of these is a recreation of the D-Day landings where one side lands in amphibious transports and have to fight their way up a beach filled with barbed wire and trenches until they can blast their way through the enemy base.

To make things even more interested the game offers five vehicles to play around in, including a Terminator like dropship. However in order to pilot any of the flying vehicles the player would need to join the game as the 'Sky Jockey' class; which is only one of the six available. The others are the Grunts, Sneekers, Demolishers, Long Rangers and Thermophiles – the latter having a great fondness for Flamethrowers!

We were especially impressed with the graphics the game had to offer and the audio did a great job of immersing us in a war-torn land filled with furry animals. Conker made us laugh an awful lot and we can only hope that its re-appearance on the Xbox means that there's hope for future adventures with Conker to be had.



Gaming's notoriously naughty squirrel is ready to stir up trouble again



Enjoy new Death Match and Campaign modes on Xbox Live or via System Link. Compete as one of six combat specialists across multi-mission campaigns

BATTLEFIELD 2

PLATFORM: PC
 GENRE: FIRST PERSON SHOOTING
 PUBLISHER: EA GAMES
 DEVELOPER: DICE
 RATING: 16+
 PLAYERS: 1-100 PLAYERS/ONLINE
 WEBSITE: WWW.EA.CO.NZ
 RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE: \$99.95
 RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW



Lock 'n load soldier. Battlefield 2 has landed on our shores and it's time to take up arms and get stuck into the fight. Over the years this franchise has grown to be one of the most popular online games on the PC. Battlefield 2 is well set to continue this trend with massive pitched battles and a jaw dropping engine ripe with luscious graphics.

Previous versions of the game have taken place during World War 2 and the Vietnam War. So we guess it's only chronologically correct to set the latest version in a fictitious modern day war – we expect the overwhelming popularity of the mod Desert Combat might have added to this decision as well! This time around there are three armies to join, the good old U.S Marine Corp, the Chinese Peoples Army or a Middle Eastern Coalition.

For those who have not yet experienced games of this sort the basic premise is that two opposing sides fight for control of flags, usually numbering anywhere from three to eight on each battlefield. All three sides have the same

classes: special forces, sniper, assault, support, engineer, medic or anti-tank units. Small differences exist in the payloads of these classes depending on the nationality of the army you belong to. Vehicles have a major role in the game with the player able to pilot, or be a passenger in a staggering number of ground, sea and air based vehicles.

On offer are twelve massive maps set either in the deserts of the Middle East, or somewhere in mainland China. For the most part we felt the maps offered a good variety of terrains and excellent balance for battle. Games can be set up to allow either sixteen, thirty-two or sixty-four players and the map will expand accordingly, often changing the entire dynamics of the battlefield as new bases, vehicles and capture points are



Style comes in a close second to speed, and Juiced offers thousands of real-time modding combinations that empower players to create their ultimate



Style comes in a close second to speed, and Juiced offers thousands of real-time modding combinations that empower players to create their ultimate

taken into account.

While fundamentally the same as other Battlefield games (and hey we aren't complaining), there are a few new features which add a lot to the game's fun level. One of these is a new squad option, this allows players to join up with a group of other soldiers in the same army, the squad leader can issue orders and even act as a spawn point, meaning the fighting can keep going on the front lines for much longer. Continuing in this theme, each side can have one commander. This person is able to launch radar drones to reveal clusters of enemies, send in parachuted supplies to needy soldiers, and most dramatically, call down massive and deadly

artillery barrages. The 'helper' classes have also gone through a revamp with the medic, support and engineer players able to get points for using their special abilities. We found we had just as much fun heroically dashing through a fire fight to use the paddle shocks to revive a fallen ally, passing out med kits and thus keeping the side fighting as we did getting into shootouts ourselves.

Barring a few issues with the menu system and the lack of support for certain video cards and a dull single player mode, Battlefield 2 is one of the biggest PC games of the year. If you've got the machine to run it and a good internet connection then add it to your collection now.

FANTASTIC 4

PLATFORM: PS2, XBOX, PC, GBA
 GENRE: THIRD PERSON ACTION
 PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION
 DEVELOPER: ACTIVISION
 RATING: M
 PLAYERS: 1 PLAYER
 WEBSITE: WWW.ACTIVISION.COM
 RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE: \$69.95
 RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW



Reed Richards is Mr. Fantastic, Sue Storm is the Invisible Woman, Johnny Storm is the Human Torch and Ben Grimm is the Thing. Together they make up the Fantastic 4, a long dormant team of superheroes who were conceived by the imaginative mind of Stan Lee, creator of the likes of Spiderman and Daredevil. The game coincides with the release of the movie and not surprisingly follows the same basic plotline in which the quad face off against Dr. Doom. By itself this probably wouldn't make for a very long game so an extra garnish of other super-villains such as Mole Man and Diablo add a little oomph to the game's overall length.

At its core Fantastic 4 is a beat 'em up. Playing as one of the four heroes, the players task naturally is to punch, kick and throw his way though hordes of monsters, thugs, robots and various other nasties. While initially few in number, each of the characters has a repertoire of combos and special moves



While playing as a team of one to four characters, the game lets players dynamically switch between characters during their adventures and combine super powers in order to level more devastating attacks and accomplish missions

which can be purchased or upgraded using points awarded by taking out said bad guys.

All four characters have their own unique special abilities which come to focus during battle or some of the game's few puzzle sequences. Mr. Fantastic is capable of rubber-like elongation which can see him delivering damage to multiple enemies at once, he can also hack certain security systems. The Invisible Woman can well...go

invisible. This can lead to some rather impressive stealth kill moves and she's also able to summon waves of force in order to either create defensive shields or attack enemies; she turned out to be our favorite character. Throughout the game the Human Torch is basically a man shaped ball of fire, he's the quickest of the lot and is strong on ranged attacks. To wrap things up the Thing is the big, rock guy with a lot of similarities to the Incredible Hulk...minus the anger issues.

Like most games, Fantastic 4 is best played with company. A good thing then that the game supports a co-op mode, although we were a touched disappointed that there's only the opportunity for two players. In fact we were rather surprised that throughout the majority of the game generally only one or two of the heroes were available in a particular level, and here we were thinking that the point to the Fantastic 4 was that they stuck together? The co-op mode also gave rise to a problematic camera which would tend to swing wildly away at the wrong possible moment!

Quibbles aside Fantastic 4 is a solid and enjoyable fighting game. For the fans there's plenty of unlockable content

such as interviews, comic book covers, biographies and so on. The graphics are crisp and the environments wonderfully destructible, we loved being able to get the Thing to use items such as a lamppost to bowl over large numbers of enemies at once. An extra touch of authenticity comes from the fact that all of the main actors from the feature film have lent their voices to the game. All in all it's a welcome return to the four-some.



Play as your favourite team member as you assume their personas and master their attributes and unique powers to solve puzzles and defeat enemies



The Human Torch creates walls of fire and supernova fireballs and shoot fire from their fingertips

CRICKET 2005

PLATFORM: PS2/XBOX/PC
 GENRE: SPORTS
 PUBLISHER: EA SPORTS
 DEVELOPER: HB STUDIOS
 RATING: G
 PLAYERS: 1-2 PLAYERS
 WEBSITE: WWW.EA.CO.NZ
 RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE: \$99.95
 RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW



With New Zealand's cricketers busily polishing their boots (and being fitted with bulletproof vests) for the forthcoming Zimbabwean tour, Electronic Arts are about to release Cricket 2005 for PS2, Xbox and PC.

The latest in EA Sports' growing franchise will let local cricket fans take control of a fully licensed Black Caps team. Players can now compete in the all-new Twenty20 slogfests as well as regular first-class cricket competitions all around the globe.

Once again Cricket 2005 is being devel-

oped by EA Canada and HB Studios (creators of the recently released Rugby 2005) and will feature the likes of Australia, England and South Africa in addition to the kiwis. EA is also promising all the county teams and tournaments, more than 35 stadiums, and a create-a-player facility so that you can add anybody who might not be on the roster.

"Cricket 2005 will be the benchmark for cricket games to come" said Andrew Wilson, senior producer, EA Canada. "Not only does the game look spectacular, bowlers now have easy to access individual repertoires and batsmen have far more control including the ability to dive into the crease to prevent an imminent run out."

Characteristically EA Sports have spent a great deal of time creating realistic player models that sport a huge level of detail in their faces and bodies, with more than 1,000 motion-captured animations. Bowlers now have distinctive actions, and batsmen will have more control over their shots than in previous titles from the series, partly thanks to the revamped HUD.

Cricket 2005 will feature a brand new option that lets you dream up and create a player and edit players as they would in other EA Sports titles such as FIFA. Players will also get a taste of captaincy: they'll be involved in the selection of batsmen, bowlers and the placing of fielders. Once again players will have the choice of fielding manually, or simply let the intelligent AI position your fielders for you.

Commentary is provided by the legend-



All new detail in players' faces and bodies, over 1000 new motion captured animations and a brand new create-a-player facility



Not only does the game look spectacular, bowlers now have easy to access individual repertoires and batsman have far more control

ary Richie "two for twenty-two" Benaud and Jim Maxwell. Sound effects are based on real sounds from around the world with their excitement levels changing according to the action on the pitch.

Cricket 2005's main competition will come from Codemasters' Ricky Ponting International Cricket, which by curious quirk of fate is also due out on PS2, Xbox and PC shortly. Codies' Ponting sim has already been given the blessing of the hooded elders of the International Cricket Council, and will feature officially sanctioned versions of the Cricket World Cup and Champions Trophy.

As we already mentioned, Cricket 2005 features over 35 accurately modeled stadiums, complete with a range of pitch types and conditions, real time weather, and night modes for Day/Night matches. EA has even included sound effects and authentic crowd sounds recorded from all over the world. Crowd effects change to reflect peaks and troughs in the game. Pitches reflect the real conditions around the world and will wear over the course of a test match. The TV style presentation offers a detailed replay feature allowing the player to view the action from an infinite number of camera angles.

TEKKEN 5

PLATFORM: PLAYSTATION 2
 GENRE: 3D FIGHTING
 PUBLISHER: SCEI
 DEVELOPER: NAMCO
 RATING: 15+
 PLAYERS: 1-2 PLAYERS
 WEBSITE: WWW.THQ.COM
 RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE: \$99.95
 RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW



Would you believe it's been 10 years since the first Tekken made you so uncontrollably happy to be bashing the crud out of your mates Capoeira style? Over twenty million units of the Tekken titles have been sold making it possibly the most successful fighting title ever made.

Well folks, it's almost over; Tekken 5 is the penultimate entry in the incredibly popular series and it's breathtakingly good. Fast-moving, beautiful and packed with more extras than the set of Hercules this is one game fighting fans don't want to miss out on.

As always the fighting is incredibly quick-paced and smooth, and technical enough to keep the serious playaz happy; if you're always getting your ass whupped in Tekken parties you'll be overjoyed to know it's easy to get started. Once you get your skills on though things take an obvious turn for the better, as the depths of the system become more obvious. Attack reversals, reversals of reversals, and wave-dashes are all there and there are some righteous as all hell combos which will see you keeping your opponent up in the air for what seems like an eternity. "Combos for days bro" indeed.

The huge number of characters available is also a very good thing; once you've unlocked them all there's more than 30 to choose from including Yoshimitsu and Wang Jinrei from Tekken 2, as well as plenty of scantily-clad options for those who are into Tekken for the booty.

The single modes are OK; arcade mode is the best and as you advance



While many presume the death of Heihachi Mishima will end the reign of Mishima Zaibatsu, an announcement is made for the fifth King of Iron Fist Tournament, with an unknown replacement to Heihachi leading the organisation

through you win cash with which to upgrade your fighters rank and buy them new clothes and accessories. Not really what you play a fighting game for but whatever.

There's no online play unfortunately (maybe in the next one? Here's hoping) but this isn't really surprising as PS2 based fighting games don't have that gig of an online history but it really would be nice to see.

You will be blown away by how good Tekken 5 looks; it's really an amazing improvement on the previous titles' tendency towards the boring and the

arenas are both wide in variety and feature plenty of animation.

Along with the arenas the characters are some of the best we've seen on any game on any platform; surprisingly this PS2 title that almost looks like it's been made for the Xbox.

All this sounds good but damn it gets better, get this: Tekken 5 ships with the original three titles as well! That's right, Tekken, Tekken 2 and Tekken 3, all emulated flawlessly in their unadulterated glory and there's not a single thing wrong with them; this is the best extra package we've ever seen and is a credit

to the Namco team for not deciding to release this package as a "Tekken Collectors Special" later on in the year.

Finally with the extras comes "Devil Within," a single player scrolling brawler starring our man Jin but while this is a good attempt to give the single player something extra you won't really play it more than a few times before you fire up something else on the disc.

We won't prattle on any more about how good this game is; suffice to say after the disappointment that was Tekken 4 it's great to see the franchise still has some punch. Badoom-tish.

STAR FOX ASSAULT

PLATFORM: GAMECUBE
 GENRE: SPACE SHOOTER
 PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
 DEVELOPER: NINTENDO
 RATING: 12+
 PLAYERS: 1-4 PLAYERS
 WEBSITE: WWW.NINTENDO.COM
 RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE: \$119.95
 RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW



Fox McCloud finally returns to the cockpit with *Star Fox: Assault*, the fearless commander's first flight adventure on the Cube. Although the plucky fox has made a few appearances on the console already, in the absolutely essential *Super Smash Bros. Melee* and somewhat disappointing *Star Fox Adventure*, his first stint back in the Arwing is what fans have been waiting for.

Along for the ride are McCloud's trusty crew of flying daredevils, most of which will be familiar to veterans of the previous N64 incarnation, with a slight change of roster. Falco and Slippy return as trusted wingmen, while Peppy has traded his flight goggles for a cushy admin job at Lylat Central Command, replaced by Fox's female counterpart introduced in *Star Fox Adventure*. The legendary squad blast off to engage what appears to be the remnants of the evil armies of Andross but soon discover they're up against an all new, far more dangerous enemy.

The latest threat to the known galaxy are the Aparoids, a nasty race of giant



Legendary team members Fox McCloud, Slippy Toad, Peppy Hare and Falco Lombardi join forces to form the most formidable team in the history of this celebrated series: the Star Fox armada



bug-like creatures whose toughness and ferocity surpass anything the Star Fox crew has encountered previously. In order to take out this abhorred new menace you will need to take the fight to the ground as well as the skies, traditional Arwing gameplay is supplemented with ground-based action, both on foot and in the devastating Land-

master Tanks.

The Arwing levels are everything Star Fox fans have been clamouring for, a return to the adrenalin-infused rail-lead flights through wave after wave of heinous flying enemy. Namco, handling development chores, have done well to capture the same manic arcade feel pioneered by Nintendo; the epic, meticulously detailed, ingeniously choreographed stages deliver a true return to form for everyone's favourite furry ace. Unfortunately the deviations from tradition, while admirable in their intentions, turn out to be the game's downfall. In a bid to inject the game with some fresh, new aspects ground-based missions are introduced in which you switch from third-person shooter to tank combat in order to storm strongholds and the like. Controlling these segments is a harsh contrast to the fluid Arwing, on foot Fox moves at tremendous speeds and can shoot faster than the man with no name, but his pace also makes the little critter frustratingly difficult to control.

Similar problems arise in the Landmaster tank, although the issue here isn't speed but just outright clumsy controls. The sluggish behemoth packs a real punch and can even hover through the air to a limited degree, but the simple task of getting where you're trying to go becomes infuriatingly tricky with the machine's less-than-perfect control mechanisms. All told, the game would have been much better off had the crew remained in the cockpit throughout, although it is always a ballsy move to try something new in a well established series like this, so Namco get a gold star for effort.

Star Fox shines in its presentation, the colourful graphics are slick and convey a dynamic sense of epic action and adventure. Vehicle designs, as is to be expected, are quite brilliant, detailed and full of personality. *Star Fox: Assault* is not without its faults, but they are not deep enough to dislodge what is essentially an engaging and fun title at its core.



BATMAN BEGINS

PLATFORM: PS2, XBOX
 GENRE: 3D ACTION
 PUBLISHER: EA GAMES
 DEVELOPER: EA GAMES
 RATING: 12
 PLAYERS: 1-4 PLAYERS
 WEBSITE: WWW.EA.CO.NZ
 RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE: \$79.95
 RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW



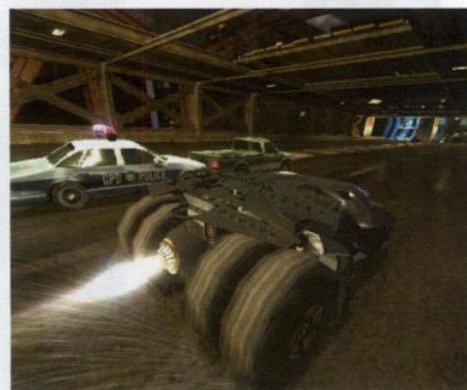
You can't have a decent action film being released without the subsequent game these days. So it's no surprise that the official license for the recent Batman Begins film has turned up in Electronic Arts humungous library joining the likes of the likeable Lord of the Rings, as well as the dire Catwoman.

Batman Begins treads new ground for EA in a style of gameplay which borrows heavily from Ubisoft's Splinter Cell games. Indeed the caped crusader likes very much to keep to the shadows in order to launch surprise attacks upon bewildered thugs and even at times by-passing well armed baddies altogether.

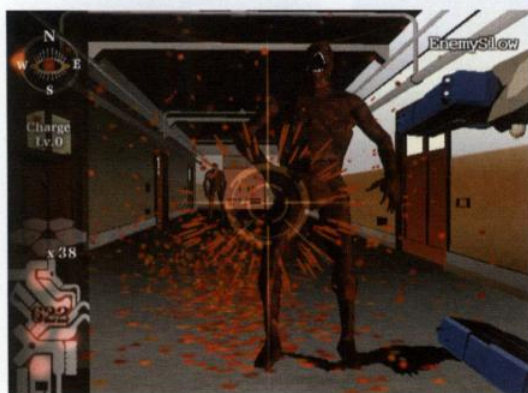
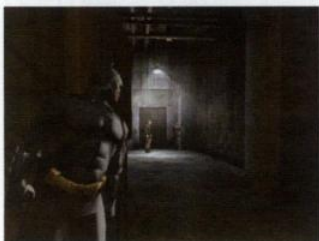
Seeing the movie first is highly recommended, without this 'guidance' you're likely to be lost in a series of bewildering cut-scenes that do little to explain what's going on. Naturally the game does its best to follow the events of the film, while adding its own content to knock a few more hours onto the time needed for completion.

Of course Batman is equipped with the various gadgetry we've come to expect as well as a swath of combat moves. As the adventure progresses you'll usually find yourself prompted to push some button, activate some machinery or use your 'batarang' to break something etc. Which brings us to the crux of the problem with this game – it's just too easy. Batman Begins from start till finish holds your hand telling you exactly where to go and what to push in a singularly linear adventure.

It's a pretty enough game, but the short length and lack of any extras such as multiplayer means Batman Begins is only really suited for the non-fussy fan. Chances are when the movie disappears from theatres, the game will likewise vanish from store shelves.



From the halls of Arkham Asylum and the alleys of Gotham City, Batman Begins the video game delivers a thrilling interactive companion to the new film



Harnessing the unique powers of his multiple personalities, Harman's, Killer 7 must navigate a post-modern landscape to track down and assassinate the evil Kun Lan before his terrorist tactics and a depraved disease destroy the world

Opinion will be divided over Capcom's surrealist new PS2 shooter but love it or hate it, Killer 7 is like nothing you've ever seen (or played) before.

Gamers take on the role of Harman Smith, a shadowy assassin who vows to thwart an underworld crime lord who has let loose an army of murderous creatures (The Heavenly Smiles) unto the world. The twist is that Harman is wheel-chair-bound, but can use his mind to release seven alter egos to fight against this threat.

With seven main characters to play, each with upgradeable weapons and varying area of expertise, there's a lot to learn. Each character has its own peculiar characteristics as well as unique background, story and weapons.

Killer 7 uses eye-catching cel-shaded graphics. It feels like an interactive Frank Miller novel. Couple this with odd camera angles, violent and gory images, including foes that detonate into thousands of droplets of blood, and illogical cutscene sequences that are as strange as they are compelling.

Interwoven with the exploration aspects of Killer 7 are a number of puzzles, which revolve around both environments and the abilities of the seven assassins.

"What truly makes this game stand out is its unique visual style, so it will be a new experience for gamers" said producer Hiroyuki Kobayashi. "The game is definitely breaking the mold, between its dark cel-shaded graphics, to the way the map is shown, to the twisted story that is well developed."

The weird but absorbing Killer 7 will be available this month on both the GameCube and PlayStation 2. If you're in the mood for a stylized shooter, this will be suitable.

KILLER 7

PLATFORM: PS2, CUBE
 GENRE: SHOOTER
 PUBLISHER: CAPCOM
 DEVELOPER: CAPCOM
 RATING: 18
 PLAYERS: 1-PLAYER
 WEBSITE: WWW.CAPCOM.COM
 RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE: \$119.95
 RELEASE DATE: JULY 22



POKÉMON[®]

EMERALD VERSION



AVAILABLE
FROM
9 JUNE
2005

**ALSO AVAILABLE
LIMITED EDITION PACK**



Compatible with Pokémon Colosseum, Pokémon Box, Pokémon Ruby, Pokémon Sapphire, Pokémon Fire Red and Pokémon Leaf Green.

Nintendo

GAME BOY ADVANCE SP[™]

The Pokémon Company

GOLDENEYE ROGUE AGENT

PLATFORM: NINTENDO DS
 GENRE: FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER
 PUBLISHER: EA GAMES
 DEVELOPER: EA GAMES
 RATING: N/A
 PLAYERS: 1-4 PLAYERS/ONLINE
 WEBSITE: WWW.EA.CO.NZ
 RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE: \$79.95
 RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW



Electronic Arts attempt to prove that size doesn't matter when it comes to global domination in bringing their sort-of GoldenEye sequel to the twin screens of the Nintendo DS. As one might expect when naming a title after one of gaming's all-time classics, GoldenEye: Rogue Agent garnered a lot of hype when it first hit the consoles but ultimately failed to live up to its namesake; the DS version goes down much the same path, hitting the same notes and missing just as many.

DS users got a brief taste of the device's superb ability to handle first-person shooters with the bundled Metroid Prime Hunters demo, but Rogue Agent is one of the first opportunities to test drive a complete offering in the genre.

In what has quickly become a DS convention the top screen houses the main action with the bottom screen acting as little more than an on-the-fly inventory menu. The touch function, combined with the thumb strap, is used to aim. It's a very fluid, easy to use system that eliminates a lot of the clumsy control problems typical of console shooters.

Beyond the controls the game offers very little to impress, its levels are stripped down versions of the console counterpart, littered with rudimentary AI and just altogether too brief. Enemies often don't even bother to react when shot, and react awkwardly when they do.

Hopefully Rogue Agent won't come to represent the pinnacle of first-person shooters on the handheld because it's a pretty superficial port, but the short title will tide over those DS gamers itching to try out the genre until something more substantial arrives.



Encounter such legendary Bond characters as Oddjob, Dr. No, Goldfinger, Scaramanga, Xenia Onatopp, and Pussy Galore on globe-spanning missions of vengeance



Players join the cast of the TV show as a newly hired intern and handles a steady flow of patients with a variety of health issues

Perhaps the oddest idea for a game this year, ER extends the television series in a way you never would have thought would make for interesting gaming. Even odder still is actually it isn't half bad.

The Sims has really opened the way for this type of reality style gameplay, notably with the release of the Playboy Mansion earlier this year and ER continues the trend; in Sim style your main character evolves based on choices and interactions you make through the game.

You start as an intern in the Chicago-based County General Hospital and are given patients to look after and treat according to their needs.

Things very quickly get tough however and you're soon racing around dealing with full on ER emergencies. On top of all this you're of course interacting with your fellow doctors, trying to score hot nurses, and making ethical decisions; the game really does have the TV series flavour and developers Legacy Interactive have done a good job giving you the ER vibe in PC-game format.

Featuring the real voice talent of Noah Wylie, Mekhi Phifer and Sherry Stringfield which further enhance the ER theme and the dialogue is fast-paced and witty much like the series. Dr Carter is in charge of you as a new intern and he is a tough cookie, setting tasks like there's no tomorrow.

Even if you're not a fan of the show, if you enjoy the Sims style gameplay you'll feel very much at home and most people will find enjoyment and a challenge in the nuttiest hospital this side of Scrubs.

ER

PLATFORM: PC
 GENRE: STRATEGY
 PUBLISHER: SOFTPRINT INTERACTIVE
 DEVELOPER: MINDSCAPE
 RATING: N/A
 PLAYERS: 1 PLAYER
 WEBSITE: WWW.SOFTPRINT.CO.NZ
 RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE: \$49.95
 RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW



MEDAL OF HONOR EUROPEAN ASSAULT

PLATFORM: PS2, XBOX
 GENRE: FIRST-PERSON SHOOTING
 PUBLISHER: EA GAMES
 DEVELOPER: EA GAMES
 RATING: M
 PLAYERS: 1-4 PLAYERS
 WEBSITE: WWW.EA.CO.NZ
 RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE: \$99.95
 RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW



The latest in the hugely successful (and rightly so) Medal of Honour franchise from EA, European Assault sees you back in the European (duh) theatre in 1942, as American Intelligence Operative William Holt.

This time round the levels have been left very wide open which gives an enormous feeling of freedom and a sense of exploration. Gone is the feeling you are just on a slow-moving train with no choice as to how you make your way through the missions, instead many different paths are available and different choices have distinctly different endings. In a new twist for the MOH franchise you are also given control of your squad, who will give you cover, and respond to your orders when you want them to focus their fire on certain sectors of the battleground.

You are taken to four very different and distinct areas throughout the game: tagging along with the British SAS on their St. Nazaire raid, North Africa against Rommel, helping the Russian partisans out and back with US forces for the final push in the Battle of the Bulge.

With a great story and awesome video sequences you'll be very much involved in how things progress; you certainly never feel like you're just shooting stuff without knowing why.

While the open-ended feel of the levels is very welcome, there are only 11 actual missions and the skilled first-person shooter fiend might only take as little as 6 hours to blast their way through the game. This is a bit of a bummer seeing as how much fun you have while you're playing but really it's not that big a deal; the great story and fast paced thrilling action will have you happy and blissfully overstimulated for those short hours.



Engage in nine different gameplay modes, including Tug of War, across nine unique multiplayer maps



Lead one of the Great Empires in titanic conflicts, or achieve economic dominance backed by shrewd diplomats and resolute military. Choose to rule as absolute despot or constitutional monarch

IMPERIAL GLORY

PLATFORM: PC
 GENRE: STRATEGY
 PUBLISHER: EIDOS INTERACTIVE
 DEVELOPER: PYRO STUDIOS
 RATING: 12+
 PLAYERS: 1 PLAYER
 WEBSITE: WWW.EIDOS.COM
 RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE: \$99.95
 RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW



Fight your way through some of the greatest conflicts of the 19th century or achieve world domination through cunning and diplomatic prowess, it's your call, and do it either way through over 50 pretty damn tasty looking fully 3d maps ranging from the flat green fields of good old Blighty to the icy steppes of deepest Russia in Pyro Studio's Imperial Glory.

In what is essentially a very good addition to the 3d Battle Strategy meets World Domination category Imperial Glory sees you in control of one of the five main powers of the Napoleonic Wars: the Brits, the Frogs, the Ruskies, and, um, the Prussians and the Austrians, your goal is to achieve domination of Europe nation by nation.

Your time is fairly evenly split between the Risk-style strategic map of Europe and various battlegrounds. While you can spend the whole game conquering area by area with just diplomacy alone, unless you've got the patience of a saint you're going to want to get stuck into giving someone the bash.

Imperial Glory also offers various quests which really help out in gaining the upper hand; be the first to build a rail system or unearth the Rosetta Stone for example will give you significant boosts in your technological research.

Also made available is the sea and you are given the opportunity to use it to gain Naval superiority, which you can use to great advantage if you are in control of the British warships.

Overall Imperial Glory is a very nice looking well made strategy title that will see you spending many hours hunched over your computer making decisions that might very well have altered the course of history.





GRAND THEFT AUTO SAN ANDREAS

PS2, XBOX, PC / ROCKSTAR GAMES

It's the early 90s. Carl's going home. His mother has been murdered, his family has fallen apart and his childhood friends are all heading towards disaster.



ALIEN HOMINID

PS2, XBOX / ZOO DIGITAL

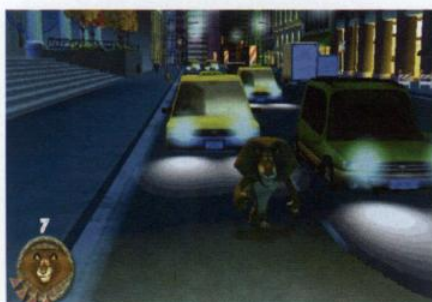
This version of Alien Hominid has been built specifically for consoles. 16 hot levels, with badass bosses, and they come armed to the teeth!



JADE EMPIRE

XBOX / MICROSOFT

Only by mastering the greatest fighting styles and defeating the most evil enemies will you earn a place as a master in the world of Jade Empire



MADAGASCAR

PS2, XBOX, PC, CUBE, GBA, DS / ACTIVISION

When a gang of penguins inspires a daring zoo break, this funky foursome trade their comfortable caged lifestyle for the adventure of a lifetime.



DESTROY ALL HUMANS!

PS2, XBOX / THQ

Your mission is to infiltrate humanity, control them, harvest their brain stems and destroy them. You choose the method - infiltration or disintegration!



JUICED

PS2, XBOX / THQ

Featuring over 50 licensed cars, 200 official aftermarket parts, and incredible online head-to-head play for up to 6 players and team-based racing.



POKEMON EMERALD

GAME BOY ADVANCE / NINTENDO

Trainers will need to use their best battling strategies ever, because this game offers the most challenging Battle fields presented in a Pokemon game.



MOTGP4

PLAYSTATION 2 / SCEI

Namco put a superb effort with the physics engine and career mode: Moto GP 4 is the best bike title on the PS2 and probably any console to date.



CODENAME PANZERS PHASE TWO

PC / CDV SOFTWARE

Everything the original did so well has been brought forward so elegantly with Phase Two. If you want to see the best the WW2 RTS, look any further.



SID MEIER'S PIRATES

XBOX / 2K GAMES

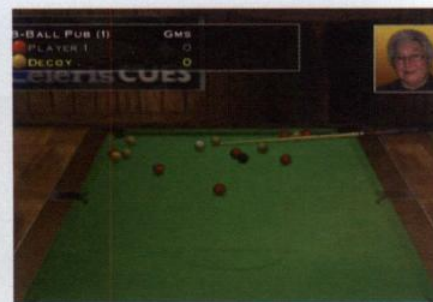
An spectacular 3D graphics and enhanced sound effects, so players can fully experience the intrigue, adventure and danger of life on the Spanish Main.



FORD MUSTANG

PS2, XBOX / 2K GAMES

Ford Mustang provides "pick up and play" gameplay at a value price. The hottest cars from the 40 year history of the Mustang on 22 tracks in 7 U.S. cities.



VIRTUAL POOL TOURNAMENT EDITION

PS2, XBOX / GLOBAL STAR SOFTWARE

Virtual Pool offers 18 different pool games on tables from Monte Carlo to a biker bar. Shoot some stick with the most advanced billiards physics ever.



FANTASTIC 4/PS2

Sony and Activision have very kindly provided a PS2 & a copy of Fantastic 4 to give away -- get your entries in now.

What's the name of the guy who can burst into flames?

- a) Flame On
- b) The Human Torch
- c) Butane Boy



GOD OF WAR

Sony has kindly given us 3 copies of this month's amazing cover title to give away: entries close soon so hurry and get in the draw.

Who is the ancient Greek warrior who is the star of God of War?

- a) Kratos
- b) Achilles
- c) Alexander the Great



TEKKEN 5

Sony has kindly given us 3 copies of their new 3D fighter, Tekken 5, to give away: entries close soon so hurry and get them in now.

Which of the following is not a fighting character in Tekken 5?

- a) Yoshimitsu
- b) Feng
- c) Moa

CONGRATULATIONS

Thank you for your entries. We had a fantastic response to last month's comps (issue 43) and there were a number of lucky names drawn: our congratulations go out to the following winners.

MOTOGP4

Jenny McPherson, Hamilton
Dorothy Brown, Christchurch
Luke Perkinson, Auckland

WRESTLEMANIA 21

Irene Hughes, Hastings
Mark Sheddan, Gore

CAPCOM PACK

Gail Wesselson, Hastings
Grant Hosking, Dunedin

HOW TO ENTER

Write the correct answer, your name and contact details on the back of the envelope (or in an e-mail). All correct entries immediately go into the draw to win. This month's winners will be drawn and notified August 10, 2005. Please refrain from flooding our email. No entries will be accepted after that date.

Send to: Gamefreaks Competition, PO Box 68-211, Newton, Auckland or e-mail us : competitions@tenthplanet.co.nz (Maximum of 3 entries per e-mail address, per competition)

For all the latest game reviews tune into...

gamestv

Bought to you by Prime TV
Saturdays 4:00pm



GASOLINA

759

Las Pistas de Gasolina
más económicas
de la
Ciudad

Y' READY TO
EAT MY DUST?

Torque up the excitement. Rev up the adrenaline. And strap up for a white knuckle ride with **Forza Motorsport™**, the most technologically advanced racing sim ever on Xbox®. Over 200 of the slickest, quickest, meanest racing machines ever invented. Yours to own. Yours to customize. Yours to tune to wicked perfection. And yours to rule the world on Xbox Live™. Because in this world, **you are what you race.**



Ferrari
Official Licensee



ONLY ON
XBOX

FORZA
MOTORSPORT

www.forzamotorsport.net



it's good to play together

©2006 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Xbox, the Xbox Logo, Xbox Live, and the Xbox Live logos are trademarks or registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Porsche, the Porsche crest and Carrera are registered trademarks of Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche AG. Sublicensed from Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche AG. The BMW Motorsport trademarks are owned by BMW AG and are used under license. General Motors Trademarks used under license to Microsoft Corporation. Acura®, the stylized "A" logo®, NSX®, and the likeness of the NSX automobile are trademarks of Honda Motor Co., Ltd. used with permission from American Honda Motor Co.

ONLINE ENABLED **LIVE**

REPUBLIC • 20132A